



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Department of Workforce Development to Focus on Indiana Small Businesses Throughout November**

November has been designated as "Small Business Month" by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, which will use the month to raise awareness of the role small business plays in Indiana's overall economy, and blitz the state's small business community to make officials more aware of IDWD's training programs, grants and other services.

"Small businesses in Indiana are becoming more and more vital to our state's economy and economic future," said Ron Stiver, Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development. "More than 315,000 Hoosiers work for employers with one to nine employees, and the median employer size in the state is five employees. Seventy percent of the new jobs in the United States come from small businesses.

"With these kinds of numbers, it is important that our state programs and services be more attuned to the small business community as well as their unique business needs," Stiver said.

Stiver said that the Department's business consultants will make a special blitz throughout Indiana during November, calling on small businesses and making them more acquainted with the Training Acceleration Grant program and network of WorkOne Centers which can provide job matching, recruiting, training and transition support services for employers of all sizes.

"We intend to reach more than 1,000 companies throughout the month to promote our services and programs. We also hope that the meetings will result in new Training Acceleration Grant (TAG) and WorkKeys applications. It is our long range hope that over time, we will see a growth in jobs and economic activity among many of these companies as a direct result of these efforts."

Stiver noted that wage growth among Indiana businesses with fewer than 10 employees from 1994-2004 grew at a faster rate than employers of more than 2,000 employees. Employment grew at these firms by 3.4 percent during this time, compared with a minus 12.8 growth rate of companies with greater than 2000 employees.

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The Training Acceleration Grant program is specifically designed to help small businesses grow and retain their workforce. The grants under this program have a sliding match scale to give small businesses additional incentives for investing in a skilled workforce and come with a simple, streamlined application process, with regional assistance available throughout the grant writing process.

WorkKeys® is an initiative designed to help employers through job assessment tools, analysis and training mechanisms. WorkKeys® helps businesses find and retain employees, help employees develop long-term career paths and promotes identification of core skills needed for employment success.

Stiver also said that the Department will provide an online application process by January 1 for the TAG program.

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